**WRITING A THESIS**

***A thesis statement is an opinion-based sentence that asserts the main argument or point of your paper. In most cases, this sentence is the last sentence in your introduction.***

**A thesis must…**

1. take a position
2. be supportable with research or examples readily available
3. be expressed in one sentence

**A good thesis is specific, not general.**

General Thesis Statement Specific Thesis Statement

Crime must be stopped. The courts need to hand out stiffer

sentences.

Dickens writes good novels. Dickens uses the setting of his novels to emphasize the themes.

A THESIS STATEMENT IS A ROAD MAP FOR WRITING YOUR PAPER. WITHOUT IT, YOU CANNOT MAKE AN OUTLINE AND YOU CANNOT TAKE NOTES.

YOU NEED TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING!

**UNDERSTANDING THESIS STATEMENTS**

Look how a writer starts with a BIG topic and can narrow it to a thesis statement:

**Subject: Maya Angelou’s “Phenomenal Woman”**

**Topic: The representation of gender roles in “Phenomenal Woman”**

**Guiding Question: What gender roles does the poem support and/or criticize?**

**Thesis Statement: Maya Angelou’s poem “Phenomenal Woman” defies gender stereotypes by presenting a woman who is strong, sensitive, and sexually confident at the same time.**

**Four Steps to Writing a Great Thesis Statement:**

1. First, write a belief statement about your topic. (I believe that the SAT

tests should be eliminated.)

1. Next, add a fact to the belief statement. (I believe that the SAT tests should be eliminated because they cannot predict success in college).
2. Lastly, take yourself out by eliminating “I believe” and you are left with a thesis statement. (SAT tests should be eliminated because they cannot predict success in college).
3. Finally, test your thesis statement using the following questions:

* Is it an opinion?
* Is it debatable?
* Is it specific?